

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 827

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 53

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL REPUBLICANS JOIN INCIDENT CENTER CONTROVERSY

REF: BELFAST 51

1. NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE HAS SET UP 7 INCIDENT CENTERS THROUGHOUT PROVINCE. 1 LOCATED WEST BELFAST, 1 NORTH BELFAST, 1 EACH LONDONDERRY, ARMAGH, NEWRY, DANGANNON AND ENNISKILLEN. TWO OF SEVERAL PARALLEL PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN CENTERS NOW SET UP BELFAST FALLS ROAD AND NEW LODGE AREAS. MOST COMMENTATORS REPORT TELEPHONE NUMBERS THESE CENTERS KNOWN ONLY TO PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN.

2. IN ULSTER TELEVISION INTERVIEW EVENING FEBRUARY 13 NORTHERN IRELAND PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN ORGANIZER SEAMUS LOUGHRAN SAID VIGILANTE PATROLS WOULD SOON BE ACTIVE REPUBLICAN DISTRICTS. HE EXPLAINED MAIN ROLE VIGILANTE GROUPS WOULD BE OBSERVING STRANGERS ENTERING AREAS. HE ENVISAGED SITUATION WHERE PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN WOULD PATROL DISTRICTS AND DEAL WITH MINOR CRIMES LOCALLY. MORE SERIOUS OFFENCES COULD BE NEGOTIATED ON HOT LINE HE SAID. LOUGHRAN STATED ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC) WOULD NEVER BE WELCOME OR ACCEPTED IN REPUBLICAN DISTRICTS

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UNDER PRESENT STRUCTURE RUC. PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN CENTERS

LOUGHRAN SAID WOULD ALSO OPERATE PARTLY AS MACHINERY WHERE LOCAL PEOPLE COULD TAKE COMPLAINTS AND CENTERS WOULD OPERATE AS ADVICE CENTERS SIMILAR TO THOSE USED BY OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES.

3. SPOKESMEN FOR REPUBLICAN CLUBS, OFFICIAL IRA VERSION OF SINN FEIN IN NORTHERN, JOINED IN CRITICISMS SURROUNDING IMPRECISE ROLE AND NATURE INCIDENT CENTERS FEBRUARY 13. IN PART STATEMENTS CLAIMED (A) CENTERS WERE OPEN INVITATION TO PROVISIONAL IRA TO TAKE POLICING POWERS (B) COMMUNITY BEING ASKED ACCEPT ROYAL ULSTER PROVISIONALS IN PLACE OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (C) POLICING VOID COULD NOT RPT NOT BE FILLED IN REPUBLICAN AREAS BY INCIDENT CENTERS SINCE ANY POLICE SERVICE WILL BE PARAMILITARY FORCE SO LONG AS LAWS SUCH AS EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT REMAINS ON STATUTE BOOK.

4. PRESS REPORTS CONSIDERABLE QUESTIONING IN PARLIAMENT FEB. 13 ON NATURE AND ROLE ADVICE CENTERS. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP) CALLING FOR ASSURANCES THAT TALKS ABOUT POLICING OR LAW AND ORDER IN AREAS WHERE OFFICIAL CENTERS LOCATED WOULD REMAIN PREROGATIVE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. PLETHORA UNIONIST COMMENTATORS OR QUESTIONERS ON SUBJECT ALSO REFLECTED CONCERN THAT ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES BEING BY-PASSED. THEIR CONCERNS HEIGHTENED BY REPORT FEB. 14 IN MORNING NEWS LETTER (MILITANT LOYVALIST) THAT OFFICIAL AND PROVISIONAL REPUBLICANS HAD BEEN INVITED BY HIGH-RANKING BRITISH ARMY AND RUC PERSONNEL NOMINATE LOCAL MEN FOR TRAINING IN RUC AND EVENTUAL RETURN TO PATROL HOME AREAS.

5. ALL PAPERS CARRIED DENIAL SECSTATE REES AT WESTMINSTER FEB. 13 THAT (OFFICIAL) INCIDENT CENTERS WILL BE USED FOR POLICING REPUBLICAN AREAS. HE SAID THEY WILL NOT RPT NOT TAKE COMPLAINTS FROM PUBLIC. IRONICALLY, THIS SERVES REINFORCE RUMOURS PREVALENT BELFAST THAT ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT SECURITY FORCES MUST NOT BE ROUTED THROUGH SINN FEIN. ONE OF MAIN SOURCES SDLP STRENGTH HAS BEEN ABILITY ACT AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN MINORITY POPULATION AND SECURITY FORCES
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